

Minutes of Pilot Commission

Port Freeport

July 13, 2016

A Meeting of the Pilot Commission of Port Freeport was held July 13, 2016, beginning at 9:00 AM in the Port Freeport Administration Building, 1100 Cherry Street, Freeport, Texas.

Commissioners present:

Mr. Paul Kresta, Chairman
Mr. John Hoss, Vice Chairman
Mr. Shane Pirtle, Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Bill Terry, Commissioner
Mr. Ravi Singhanian, Commissioner

Staff Members present:

Mr. Jason Cordoba, Legal Counsel
Ms. Phyllis Saathoff, Executive Director/CEO
Mr. Jeff Strader, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Al Durel, Director of Operations
Ms. Missy Bevers, Executive Assistant

Absent:

Mr. Rudy Santos, Commissioner
Mr. Jason Hull, Director of Engineering
Mr. Jason Miura, Director of Business & Economic Development
Mr. Mike Wilson, Director of Business Development
Ms. Dianna Kile, Director of External/Government Affairs

Also present:

Captain Daniel Blanton, Brazos Pilots Association
Captain John Gunning, Brazos Pilots Association
Mr. Doug Shoemaker, Blank Rome
Mr. Keith Letourneau, Blank Rome
Ms. Sarah Marsh, Dole Fresh Fruit
Mr. Anne Marie Poninski, Phillips 66
Mr. Niels Aalund, WGMA
Mr. Gene Theriot, Dow Chemical
Mr. Chad Janosky, Bay-Houston
Mr. Randy Moore

1. CONVENE OPEN SESSION in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:
2. Approval of minutes from the Pilot Commission Meeting held June 16, 2016.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hoss to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Terry with all Commissioners present voting in favor of the motion.

3. Receive general update from President of Brazos Pilots Association regarding the following items:
 - A. Current vessel activity & pilot coverage.
 - B. Status of search for new Deputy Pilot.
 - C. Withdrawal of application for rate increase.

Captain Daniel Blanton reported the pilots are at reduced operations averaging approximately 50-80 ships a month. Seaway is in the process of building a flare so they can begin exporting. They are still importing crude oil but the numbers are down. Dow has been steady. Conoco Phillips will come on line in September which will bring more traffic and at that time the Pilots will review their tug matrix.

They are anticipating 8 ships a month per dock. Port remains steady with Hoegh, Dole and MSC however, project cargo has curtailed and Tenaris has slowed down.

Captain Blanton stated they are still recommending four pilots for pilot coverage. Captain Teeter is back and to date has brought in 21 ships. He is getting better every day and they anticipate having him back in full swing in August. Captain Gunning has been helping out in the interim and once they get in a comfortable position and the Brazos Pilots are comfortable, they will look at transitioning over. Commissioner Kresta asked for clarification on the transitioning period. Captain Blanton stated when Captain Gunning decides to step down, which has not been determined, another candidate or solution will be place.

The Pilots requested the resumes on file for deputy pilots to begin their search. Captain Blanton stated the Pilots feel the candidate pool is adequate and they will be able to find a good candidate. They are currently identifying those they want to target for interviews.

Commissioner Pirtle inquired about the training period. Captain Blanton stated the state statute requires two years of training adding they try to find solid candidates who can pick up the workload quickly and move ships on their own.

Ms. Saathoff stated that after the Pilots have narrowed their candidate selection, the Port would assist in making sure the required documentation under the transportation code is provided and to ensure the Pilot Commission takes care of their responsibilities under the law. After further discussion, Commissioner Hoss inquired about the process to become a member of the Pilot Association. Captain Blanton stated that after the two-year deputyship period, the Brazos Pilots will recommend to the Board they be given a commission. The Port Commission will make a recommendation to the Governor and the Governor then issues the commission. At that time, the pilot becomes a member of the Association as a Branch Pilot. Until that time, he is considered to be under an apprenticeship.

Randy Moore, legal counsel for the Brazos Pilots Association addressed the Commission regarding the withdrawal of application for rate increase stating that it wasn't advantageous at the time to pursue.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION in accordance with Subchapter D of the Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Section 551.001, et. seq., to review and consider the following:

A. Under authority of Section 551.071 for discussion regarding:

1. Consultation with attorney regarding pilotage rules and procedures.

5. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION

6. Adjourn.

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at p.m.